



WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

TO THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

A Public Relations Letter To All California Physicians

DEAR DOCTOR:

You probably will be reading this at your office. No doubt there are many things to be done—charts to write, files to be completed—and maybe you had hoped for a few minutes to tidy up your desk, or even to read other articles in this journal. But please . . . for right now . . . won't you just lean back and treat yourself to a few minutes of relaxation as you read this page? (You may even rest your feet on the desk—while I hope that the phone doesn't ring until you finish!)

Of course you have already guessed that I want to tell you a little about the public relations activities of your state auxiliary. And before we go any further, I do trust that your wife is a member! If she isn't, won't you please encourage her to join her county auxiliary? She will find it very rewarding, for the aims of the auxiliary are very much the same as those of your C.M.A. She will meet women whom she will grow to know and to love. Many of these women will become cherished friends—certainly one of the finest compensations of auxiliary membership. Your wife will learn of issues affecting medicine, and in turn perhaps she can inform you, for the auxiliary works very closely with the A.M.A. and the C.M.A. as well as with the component county medical associations.

Public relations is really a very broad field. It isn't something which can be accomplished in a single program or project, but it's "everything we do—or fail to do—our every act, and word and attitude—which creates an impression, good or bad, on the public." It's the way we live our own personal lives and the manner in which we conduct our auxiliary activities. Good public relations is not something which can be accomplished entirely by just one person or even by one committee—it takes all of us working together to be most effective. And that's just another reason why we need every doctor's wife as an auxiliary member.

To acquaint the public with the aims of the Medical Association and its auxiliaries some specific projects are planned each year in all our counties. It may be an auxiliary booth at the county or state fair which helps persons without medical background to better understand the medical profession; or it may be active participation in civil defense or community health. All such activities are, of course, with the approval of the Medical Association. Many county auxiliaries hold a combined meeting with the wives of lawyers and dentists. This may be announced

as "Auxiliary Guest Day" or "Community Leadership Luncheon."

Individually an auxiliary member promotes good public relations when she thinks to send gift subscriptions for *Today's Health* to her nonmedical friends; when she contributes service hours to civil defense or to some of the voluntary health programs within her community.

The American Medical Education Foundation, the Physicians' Benevolence Fund and Nurse Recruitment are all major auxiliary projects. The element of self help has a definite appeal within our own group and with the public as well. By planning fund-raising activities for these worthwhile projects the auxiliary has been given some excellent press coverage throughout the entire state.

The Christmas season is a perfect time of year for the auxiliary to help the less fortunate people in its community. Literally hundreds of gifts are taken to hospitals, rest homes and orphanages. Phonograph records, hair dryers, cosmetics, subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, toys and dolls are just some of the gifts which cheered many a heart last Christmas day.

You may be interested to know that the C.M.A.'s new public relations *Newsletter* is being sent to every member in our state auxiliary—almost 7000 women. We think it is very informative and we are pleased to have been placed on your mailing list.

In speaking before a group of physicians' wives, Mr. James E. Bryan, author of *Public Relations in Medical Practice*, said: "The wife of a physician can play her most important role helping to build a bridge of understanding between the doctor and the nonmedical community. Although she is a doctor's wife, she is also a part of the nonmedical world about him." Mr. Bryan suggested that the wife of a doctor can do much for medical public relations if she takes a leading part in the community. The very fact that a devoted worker is a doctor's wife will reflect credit on the entire medical profession.

Well, these are some of the public relations activities I wanted to tell you about—nothing too spectacular really. However, we always keep in mind that we are an auxiliary to the California Medical Association and that our activities must always reflect credit upon the medical profession. This motto we keep before us, "We teach a little by what we say. We teach more by what we do. But, we teach most by what we are."

Sincerely,

MRS. FLOYD K. ANDERSON,
Public Relations Chairman